

The University of Western Ontario

SOCIOLOGY 3306A-001

Investigating the Social World: Quantitative Research

Mondays 9:30 to 12:30 SSC 1032

Delivery Method – In-Person

Instructor: Dr. Teresa Abada

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, both days from 11:00 AM till 12:30 PM (you must set up an appointment with me ahead of time and we will meet through Zoom)

Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5429

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Course Description:

The goal of this course is to provide the students with a sophisticated understanding of both evaluating and conducting quantitative social science research. Starting from the formulation of research questions to data collection and analysis, and final reporting, this course introduces fundamental process of quantitative research and exposes students to conceptual and analytic tools and procedures. In addition to a textbook, a selection of research articles will be used to exemplify how each element of the process are applied. Building on these readings, students will be challenged to develop their own research project by applying the knowledge from this course. Throughout the course, an emphasis will be placed on the relationship between theory and methods, meaning behind the numbers, and story based-on the evidence.

Mandatory for third-year Sociology students in an Honours Specialization. In this course students will learn to evaluate quantitative sociological research and gain hands-on experience carrying out and writing up a research project that investigates current social issues. Topics include: posing a research question, developing concepts and measures, and analyzing quantitative survey data.

Prerequisite(s): Sociology 2205A/B and Sociology 2206A/B.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Antirequisite(s): None

Learning Outcomes:

Apply theory and sociological research to interpret social events and practices

- Understand and demonstrate the competent use of different quantitative and research methodologies.
- Interpret the results of multivariate quantitative data analyses
- Understand and meet the ethical standards for conducting research with human subjects.

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- Write papers that make a sustained, evidence-based, sociological argument, and present ideas and sociological concepts clearly.
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills and the ability to discuss ideas clearly and articulately.

Required Text

Textbook: - Singleton, R. and B. Straits. 2018. Approaches to Social Research, 6th Ed. Oxford University Press. For the details of the textbook purchase, please visit the UWO bookstore website for this course at: https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2022A&courses%5B0%5D=002_UW/SOC3306A

Required supplemental readings: In addition to the textbook, two chapters (Chs 12 and 13) from the following book is assigned for the later part of this class: **Remler, D. K. and G. G. Van Ryzin. 2021. Research methods in Practice, 3rd Ed. Sage Publications, Inc.**

The chapters that are assigned as a part of the required readings are scanned and available on the OWL. Both books are held on reserve at the Library and available to the students enrolled in SOC 3306A.

Supplemental readings: A set of supplemental readings are offered in order to help you better understand the materials. They will be posted on the course website (OWL).

Sample Dataset of Instruction: The General Social Survey, Cycle 27: Social Identity (Statistics Canada, 2013) will be used to illustrate examples and concepts taught in the course. Students are encouraged to develop a course project, which uses this dataset.

Statistical Computing: The statistical computing for the course will be done using STATA. STATA is available on computers located in the Social Science computing lab (Room 1032). If you would like to work on STATA for a course project from home, it is also available via MyVLab (<https://myvlab.uwo.ca/>), free of charge for the students registered in this course. You can find access information at: https://myvlab.uwo.ca/using_mfa_on_myvlab.html. Required supplemental readings

Occasionally additional readings may be assigned throughout in addition to textbook chapters. All of these readings will be posted on the course website. More information will be provided in class. To access them, please make sure you are enrolled on the course website through owl.

The textbook offers extensive coverage of in-depth technical components of quantitative research. You are expected to complete the readings assigned for each week, yet you are not expected to have mastered them on your own. Lecture will help you identify key concepts and processes, which are necessary for you to apply them in a real research context. Further, supplemental readings are offered to introduce how sociologists apply those processes in actual

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publications, which will offer good examples for you to develop your ideas sociological research.

How to Contact Me

Email: tabada@uwo.ca

How to get important course information:

Teaching assistant: TBA

For information about the course, please read the course outline carefully. Also, check your email and course website for announcements.

Method of Evaluation

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

1. ***Develop a Research Project: 65%***
 - a. Literature Review and Formulating a Research Question (20%)
 - b. Research Proposal (45%)
2. ***Midterm Exam (35%)***

Evaluation Breakdown

1. ***Develop a research project: 65%***

To demonstrate your knowledge of quantitative research methods, you will be asked to develop a research proposal based on the use of the Canadian General Social Survey, Cycle 27, Social Identity.

This assignment will consist of two components:

- a) **Formulating a research question** – maximum 5 pages (20%)
Due on Monday, October 17 at 11:55 PM
- b) **Final research proposal** – maximum 12 pages (45%)
Due on Monday, December 5 at 11:55PM

Final research proposal builds on the first assignment that you submitted earlier. In doing so, you are encouraged to modify the initial draft based on the feedback that you received.

2. ***Midterm (35%) November 14 2022.***

This will take place in-class and will consist of multiple choice, T/F, short/long answer type questions. I will provide more detail in class.

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Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

I do not allow the use of laptops or any other computer device on the exam. Calculators are allowed on the exam.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Missed Exams

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the Academic Counseling office at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam. If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor's documentation, you will be allowed to write a makeup exam or hand in your assignment at a later date.

Course project and Exam

Note that students must complete all course requirements. Physical and mental health issues are not deemed as reasons to not complete the course requirements.

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Upon approval by the Academic Counselling Office, an extension for the submission will be considered. The lengths of extension will be determined based on the assessment by the Academic Counselling Office.

Unexcused late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (including weekend days). Please note that computer or internet problems are not an excused circumstance. You are expected to follow good computer practices, including backing up your work.

Note: missed work can only be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is not sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

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Important Policies

Academic Consideration for Missed Work: Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. The student medical certificate is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at <https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Accessibility Options: Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

A Note on Plagiarism: Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where

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appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Mental Health: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic_counselling/).

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter Instagram, etc, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class. I do not allow the recording of my lectures. in class.

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Course Schedule and Readings

****The following outline is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on OWL****

*S&S = Singleton & Straits textbook 6th edition

Week	Date	Topic/Assignment	Assigned Readings
1	Sept 12	The Process of Social Science Introduction to the Course	S&S Ch. 2
3	Sept 19	Quantitative Research Designs Discussion on course projects and developing research questions	S&S Ch. 4
4	Sept 26	Writing Research Reports & Literature Search Library presentation	S & S Ch. 17
5	October 3	Survey Research Methods Research Hypothesis and Operationalization	S&S Ch. 9
6	October 17	Concepts to Measurement Introduction to Statistical Software	S & S Ch. 5
7	October 24	Survey Instrumentation Data processing	Chapter 10 S & S
8	November 7	Sampling Data processing	S&S Ch. 6

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9	November 14	Midterm	
10	November 21	Data Processing, Analysis and Interpretation & Multivariate Analysis and the Elaboration Model	S & S Chapter 15
12	November 28	Multivariate Analysis and the Elaboration Model (continued)	S & S Elaboration pp. 532-539 Remler and van Ryzin Ch 12 and suggested reading Remler & van Ryzin Ch 11
13	December 5	<i>Research Project due</i>	